

Opportunities for Geologists and Geophysicists

For more than a century, many of the Nation's top graduates in geology and related earth science fields have chosen to work for the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS). Commitment to the pursuit of impartial scientific inquiry has made the USGS an employer of choice in the geoscience disciplines. As America's premier earth and natural resources science investigations and research group, the USGS offers a broad range of career possibilities to geoscientists.

Professional geoscientists at the USGS are engaged in geologic data gathering and research that provide information for managing the Nation's land, energy, and mineral resources. USGS geoscientists conduct laboratory and field work at many different locations, but most are stationed at one of three locations: Reston, Virginia; Denver, Colorado; or Menlo Park, California. Some of the geoscientists are involved in determining the distribution of mineral resources and studying the processes that control the occurrence of mineral deposits. Other geoscientists investigate the nature, extent, and origin of the Nation's coal, oil and gas, and geothermal resources. Geoscientists also prepare geologic maps and conduct geological, geophysical, and geochemical surveys to characterize the influence of the Earth's natural systems and the impact of human activities on the global environment. Still others are involved in the investigation and ultimate mitigation of hazards resulting from earthquakes, volcanic activity, and landslides.

Basic Qualification for Geologists:

Basic qualification for the geologist series, GS-1350, is a degree in geology with 20 additional semester hours in any combination of mathematics, physics, chemistry, biological science, engineering (structural, chemical, civil, mining or petroleum), computer science, planetary geology, comparative planetology, geophysics, meteorology, hydrology, oceanography, physical geography, marine geology, or cartography.

Basic Qualification for Geophysicists:

Basic qualification for the geophysicist series, GS-1313, is a degree that includes at least 30 semester hours in mathematics (including calculus) and the physical sciences (geophysics, physics, engineering, meteorology, geology, astronomy, electronics, etc.).

Alternative Qualifications:

Candidates may also meet the basic requirements with a combination of related experience and the specific course work requirements for the particular geoscience discipline. These basic qualifications fulfill the requirements at the GS-5 level. Candidates who meet basic requirements will also qualify at the GS-7 level if they meet the criteria for Superior Academic Achievement*. Otherwise, applicants for positions at GS-7 and above must have additional professional experience or directly related graduate education.

The USGS is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate based on race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, non-disqualifying handicap conditions, or any other non-merit factors.

*Superior Academic Achievement requires: membership in a national scholastic Honorary Society above the freshman level; or standing in the upper third of the class; or an overall GPA of 3.0 or higher; or a GPA of 3.5 or higher for all the work in the major as computed on 4 years of education or during the final 2 years of the curriculum.